

**Smith, Tasha**

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**From:** Debra Cohen <debracohen51@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, March 23, 2017 5:27 PM  
**To:** JudTestimony  
**Subject:** Proposed House Bill 7285

Written Testimony Supporting Proposed House Bill 7285:

An Act Concerning Complaints That Allege Misconduct By Law Enforcement Agency Personnel

Senator Doyle, Senator Kissel, Representative Tong and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Debra Cohen. I reside in Wethersfield and I am writing to share my support for Proposed House Bill 7285. I also support amendments that will strengthen its ability to ensure all CT citizens have fair and unobstructed access to complaint forms as well as information about how best to navigate the process of filing their complaint.

While standards have been set for complaint procedure compliance across our state, such standards are not yet being universally met or enforced. All CT citizens deserve clear and unintimidating access to this information. Citizens must know where forms are available away from police departments and that complaints can be made anonymously. Forms that ask for a signature but do not disclose that signatures are not required only serve to discourage many people who would otherwise submit their complaint form.

Reaching truly meaningful legislation that serves the best interests of all CT citizens must include the following:

1. establishment of meaningful penalties for law enforcement agencies that do not comply with state complaint acceptance and investigation laws
2. creation of a standardized complaint form that is compliant with best practices and translated into all commonly spoken languages in CT
3. requirement of law enforcement agencies to track complaint data and to annually report such data to the CT Office of Policy and Management

Standardized enforcement will help foster much needed trust between citizens in all CT cities and towns and their police departments. I urge your committee to amend and support Proposed House Bill 7285.

Respectfully submitted,

Debra Cohen

73 Church Street

Wethersfield, CT 06109

